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China Painting.

LETTER TO A YOUNG LADY

WHO ASKED IF SHE COULD LEARN CHINA PAINTING.

IV.

I WAS sure you would find a large brush difficult to manage. Just as it is well loaded with color, the bristles divide and subdivide; it seems impossible to make a broad, smooth stroke. Sometimes the brush hairs can be pressed together with the fingers; oftener, it is best to wash the color all out in the turpentine, pressing some of the moisture out of the brush on a rag, then patting it in the oil on the palette, before taking up the color again. After experimenting in this way a number of times, you will probably reach the best way, and follow it. Do not be discouraged; others have done this, and you can do it.

You will soon learn that a very little color will make a light tone, and vice versa. But it is not the amount of paint that is going to give you the depth of color desired; it is the color itself; for even dark colors should be painted lightly on china. Hence the transparency which is so charming. Too much paint will surely blister in the firing. Aim to make the first painting as dark as required; but if it lacks force after thorough drying, strengthen it with delicate touches. Dash and indefiniteness are very agreeable in oil or water-colors, but ruinous to china painting.

You say you are having a great deal of trouble with your greens. You are wishing all the time there was at least *one* green sufficient in itself to use upon a leaf without running the risk of an addition that may fire out or otherwise alter it beyond recognition.

I think I can safely say, two of your greens will do that. But, my dear, in all kinds of painting the greens are made by the artist to suit the relative position in the painting, and very, very rarely used in the crude manufactured condition. Of course that is one point you are to gain by experience.

Mineral paints have the advantage that the foundation greens are already made for you, and half a dozen blues and yellows are not required for different tones. So little consideration as to perspective enters necessarily into china painting that your colors naturally are limited. That is one reason why, within certain limits,

it is easily mastered by those who may have had no previous training in drawing. When you have learned how to handle the brush on the smooth china, the rest is simple, being chiefly a matter of practice.

Do not be afraid, then, to mix your greens as you progress. They will fire out very much the same as you paint them. Greens lose but little when mixed together; it is only by the addition of yellow that they lose in firing. Therefore for the present avoid using yellow. As I said before, you have two greens that can be used pure with good effect—brown green and green No. 7; these also in combination with the others look and fire well. Mix emerald green with brown green and green No. 7; also, deep blue green with No. 7 (this for the gray sides of leaves), deep blue green with brown green, and brown green with apple green. The latter is seldom good

when the painting is dry, and it is best not to outline until the design has been dried by artificial heat, or has stood over night. As a rule, the whole design should be outlined in one and the same color.

Violet of iron (a color not mentioned before) is appropriate for almost everything. It is a dull red, and does well for leaves as well as flowers, although sometimes dark green No. 7 and brown 4 or 17 make a pleasant variation, each one used alone.

Use the finest pointed brush for outlining, and a good deal of color, comparatively dry. Send for another brush if you cannot make a hair line with the one you have; for a fine line is absolutely indispensable. A broad line will make the design heavy. You must use your own judgment whether to paint the outline over the color on leaf or flower. Sometimes it is best to place it

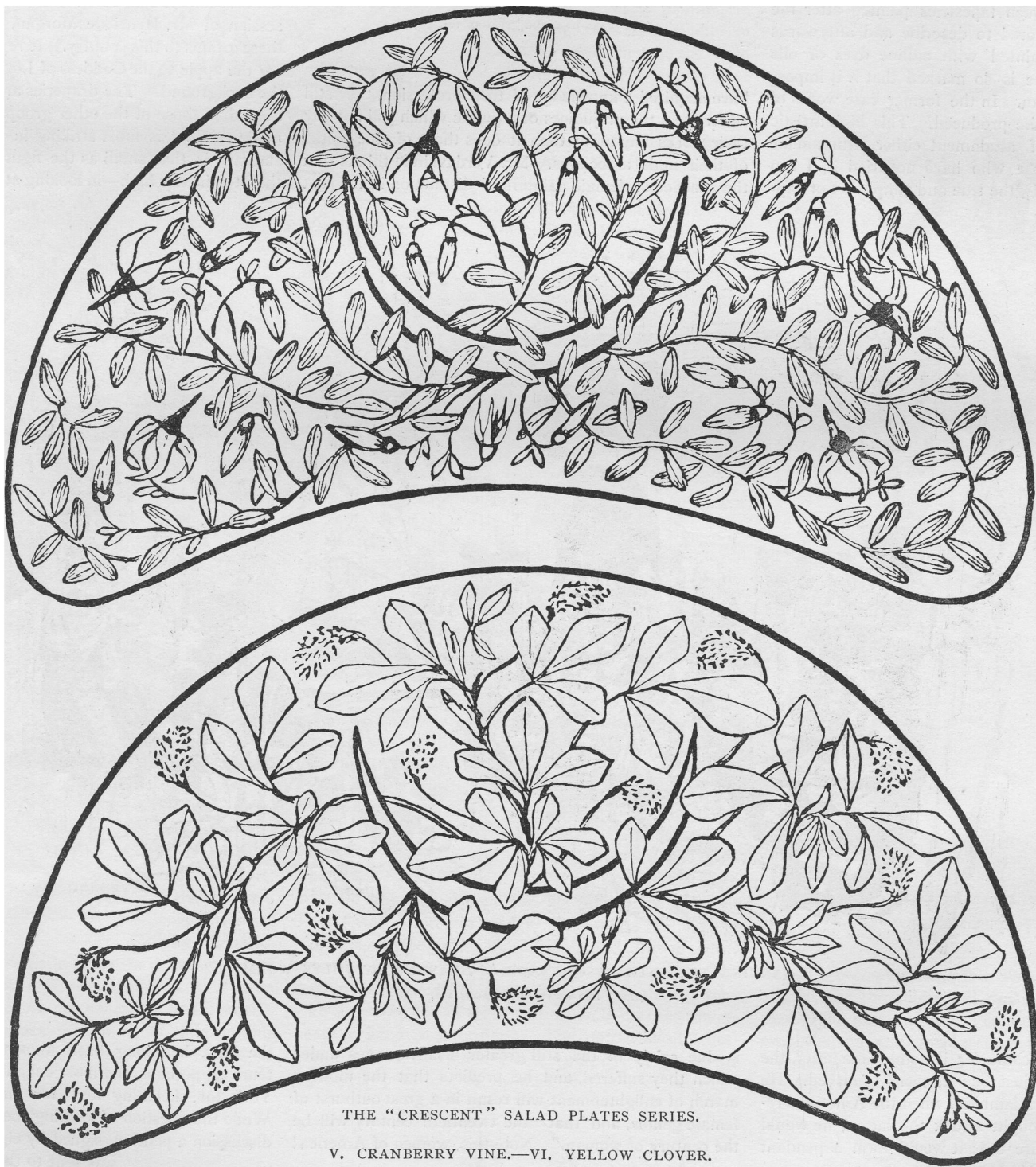
close to, but outside. You need not fear that any of the colors mentioned will change in the firing.

You ask the colors for shading white flowers: pearl gray, green No. 7, apple green and mixing yellow. White flowers are just as difficult to shade in mineral colors as in other methods. Because the tones are so delicate, and some allowance must be made for firing out, perhaps on china they are most difficult. Gray used alone always fires out more than other colors; and so, in order to make it more permanent, use the greens in combination. I cannot tell you just the proportion of each to use. You must experiment on the side of your plate, until you reach the tone desired. Not much of the apple green, but more of the green No. 7; with the gray none of the yellow, except near the calyx, where white flowers are slightly yellow. Remember.

a very little yellow is strongly emphasized by firing.

Paint the shadows slightly deeper than you would like them, and let the stroke of color be very faint as the shadow vanishes. A touch of apple green over the yellow close to the calyx is needed in all white flowers. Do not shade them too much, and let the outline be in green No. 7 or in violet of iron.

The narcissus is a charming flower to paint on china. You can easily procure a good copy at the art stores, if you are not fortunate enough to have a study of your own from nature. Shade the flower with the colors suggested. Paint the centre with silver or jonquil yellow. When it is dry, edge this yellow with deep red brown, then with brown green and green No. 7; shade the centre round the three stamens that are so decided in shape. Bring the shading of the flower close to the red on the side farthest from the light—this will throw



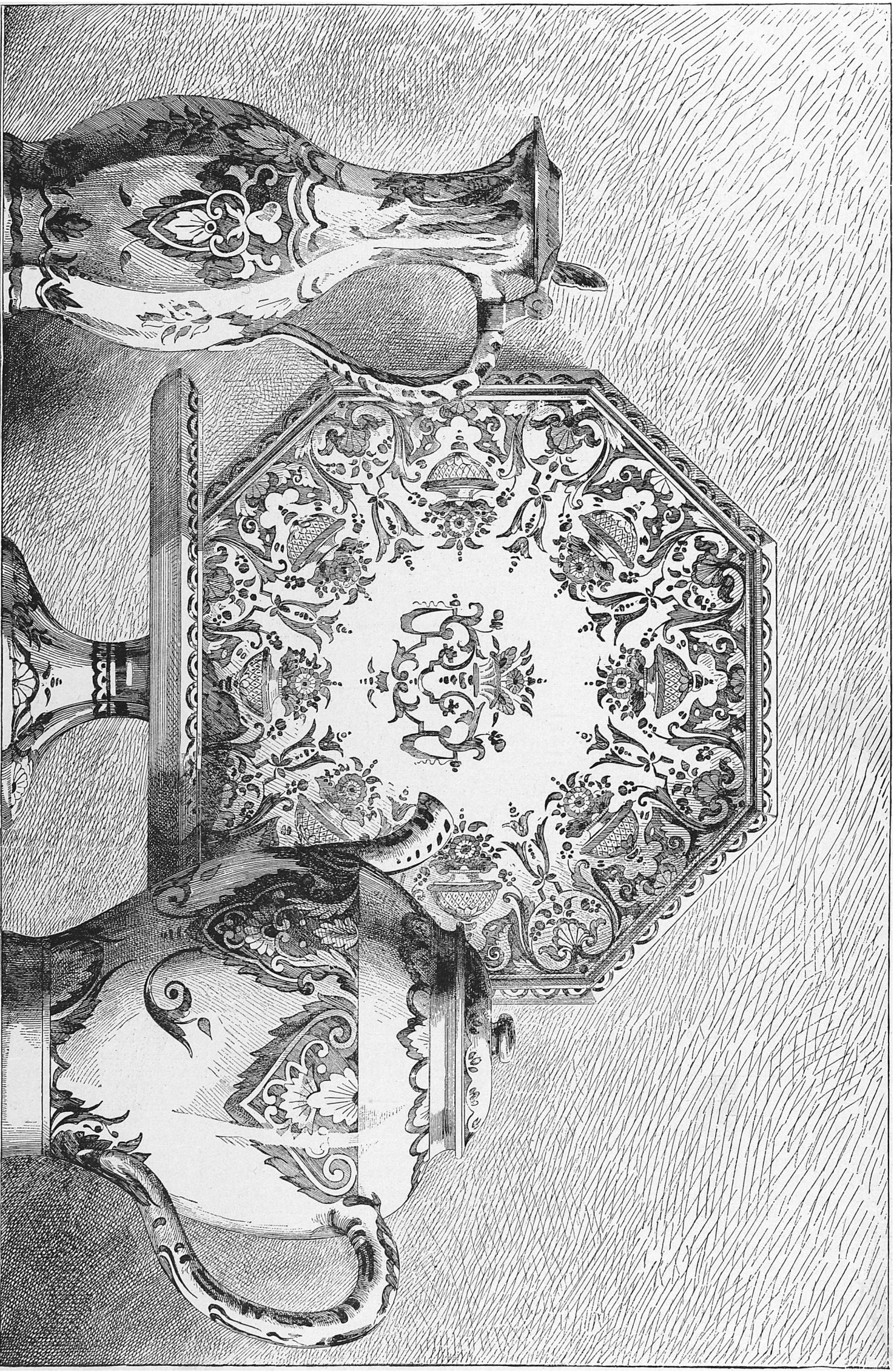
THE "CRESCENT" SALAD PLATES SERIES.

V. CRANBERRY VINE.—VI. YELLOW CLOVER.

used alone; it is best with mixing yellow. These five greens can be varied ten times, using two at once, and surely that is enough; do not mix more than three at one and the same time, or your work will be muddy.

Do not have your combinations very cold, and do not shade the leaves very much. Flat tones look best. You will not find these in chromo cards. You may, however, in studies sold for water-color painting; these are by far the best for you to copy.

You have doubtless seen china painting outlined in gold, but do not think of working in gold at present. A fine outline of color, however, will add much to the beauty of your work. In the first place, it will oblige you to confine your color within proper limits, and thus secure a smooth edge, and it will also make your drawing more accurate. Avoid ragged edges. It is well to scrape off any inadvertencies of color with a pen-knife



OBJECTS OF OLD ROUEN FAÏENCE. BLUE AND WHITE DECORATION.

the centre into greater prominence, as it should be. The green leaves of the narcissus should be painted with pearl gray, deep blue green, green No. 7 and a little emerald green. Mix the gray and blue green, and add the others as your taste suggests. Outline in green No. 7. Prang publishes a charming card of white clover that would look well on china. The outline in green No. 7 will do much for the shading and shape of this flower; but between the petals work in a little apple green and mixing yellow; the daintiest bit of carnation on the tips of the older petals, and brown green and brown 4 or 17 close to the calyx, where the petals spread apart. Use mixing yellow, brown green and emerald for the leaves, with green No. 7 for the darkest touches. You are not obliged to add the yellow butterfly or the red sorrel to your painting unless you desire to do so.

In my next letter I will give you the colors for yellow, pink and red flowers.

L. STEELE KELLOGG.

ROYAL WORCESTER VASE DECORATION.

THE graceful design for a Royal Worcester vase decoration given in one of the supplement pages last month would look especially well if gold only were employed, in the three shades of red, green, and matt or Roman gold. Begin by wiping the vase over with turpentine, afterward drying it with a clean cloth. Then proceed to lay on the ground before transferring the design. Grind well some vellum with a little turpentine until it is perfectly smooth; add some copaiba. Let the mixture be thin enough to flow freely from the brush. Apply the tint with a broad flat brush and blend it until it is quite even with a pouncer made of cotton wool tied up loosely in some soft old cambric. When the tint is perfectly dry, transfer the design neatly. This done, scrape the vellum away from within the lines of the design.

The paste for raising the gold can now be applied to the flowers. Raise each petal solidly. Be careful to make the dots in the centres as distinct as possible. The leaves and stems must be raised in outline only.

Before the first firing, paint the handle, base and band round the neck of the vase with a flat tint of bronze green or pompadour red should the latter color be preferred. Do not forget when this tint is dry, to scrape the color off the band on the neck where the leaves are drawn.

After the first firing, proceed to paint with the colored golds. It is much the better plan for amateurs to buy the gold ready prepared on glass slabs, because it then needs grinding to a fluid state with a little turpentine only. The principal reason that gold frequently blisters in the firing is that too much fat oil is added to it in the mixing.

Use matt gold for the petals of the flowers and red gold for the centres. Let the matt gold dry before putting on the red; otherwise they will probably blend and spoil the desired effect. For the leaves take green gold and for the stems red gold. Put matt gold on the design around the neck-band. Splash the handle and base with matt gold. Use for this purpose rather a firm short-haired flat-end brush. Be very particular when painting the leaves to cover well the raised outline, but on no account to go beyond it.

THE ORCHID DESSERT SET.

THE orchid plate, given in the supplement this month, is the sixth of the set of a dozen now in course of publication. This orchid (lady slipper) is a very showy one; it will stand out very well if painted on the white china. If a background is desired, use a delicate tint of green (apple green). The same color, a little stronger, may be used for the greens of the plate, mixing a little "yellow for mixing" with it. The leaves, stems, and long slender parts of the flower should be green. The bag-like portion of the flower should have a delicate yellow tinge (yellow ochre) in the upper part and along the central line. This yellow shades off into a delicate pink (carmine No. 1) toward the centre, and the pink has a bluish tinge in the lower part of the flower. To get this tint mix Victoria blue with the carmine. Shade the stems with deep red brown and put in the little hairy parts with the same color. Leaves should be shaded with brown green and deep red brown, using very little of the latter. The four longer parts of the flower are shaded with deep red brown, the tips being particularly

dark. The fifth and shorter petal (which is the upper one) shade with brown green. The veinings or markings in the other part of the flower are a mixture of deep carmine and Victoria blue—very little of the latter.

THE DESIGNS FOR SALAD PLATES.

THE following directions are given by "Kappa" for the treatment of the fifth and sixth of the designs for a set of salad plates given herewith: Edge each plate and outline the design with gold. Use gold also for the crescent in the centre, outlining it with brown green.

For the cranberry vine design use a delicate wash of carnation for the flower, deepening it for the buds and where the outer side of the flower petal shows. Use purple for the base of the flower centre, tipping it with gold; brown for the stalks. Add brown green to apple green for the calyx of the buds, and for the leaves shade the leaves with brown green. If gold is not used, outline the flowers with carnation, the leaves with brown green, using yellow brown for the crescent.

For the yellow clover design use orange yellow for the flowers and add brown green to apple green for the leaves and stalks. If gold is not used, outline with brown green. For the background use either the white of the china, Chinese yellow or celadon for the entire set.

"CUPID'S CALL."

THE charming crayon sketch by Aubert, given on page 108, would be very suitable transferred to china. Dresden colors seem to be generally preferred for flesh painting. Transfer the drawing as delicately as possible; then go over the whole outline of the figure with a faint shade of Pompadour red; put in the markings of the features with the same color. When this is dry, lay on a flat tint, composed of Pompadour red mixed with a very little ivory yellow and some tinting oil; blend the tint with a flat-end stippling brush. While the tint is still wet, put in the shadows with blue green and yellow brown with some of the flesh color already mixed added to them. Blend the shadows with a stippling brush. Lay in the hair with yellow brown and the wings with light gray, leaving the china to do duty for the high lights. Outline the bow, arrow and trumpet with chestnut brown. The panel is now ready for the first firing. Be careful to clean the edges before firing if by chance the color has gone beyond the outline in blending, as is frequently the case; also remove all specks of dust with a needle point. After the first firing, paint in the background a blue gray. For this you can use Lacroix colors; neutral gray mixed with ultramarine blue gives the desired shade. The figure can now be worked up with the same colors already used. Shade the hair with chestnut brown. Modify and cool the high lights with a faint tinge of Brunswick black. Use matt gold for the bow and trumpet and silver for the arrow. Dresden colors, although more expensive than others in the first instance, are really very economical; because they can be used again and again after being put out on the palette, provided they are carefully protected from dust when laid aside.

Amateur Photography.

TALKS WITH BEGINNERS.

III.—FIELD WORK AND DEVELOPMENT.

SOME years ago, when I began the serious study of photography after some preliminary dabbling in it, I found myself all at sea as to what constitutes beauty in a picture. This point I felt must be settled once for all before I could hope to rise above dull mediocrity in my work, and while I am yet very far from a perfect learning of the lesson, I have made some advance in the right direction. I occasionally surprise myself with a genuine picture.

The first discovery I made was that art works by rules, and the best rules which I have been able to find are the following, formulated by Captain Abney, which I give here as the foundation of all my teaching on this subject:

1. If the object of interest be on the foreground, its base should occupy a position of from one fourth to one third the height of the picture; if it be in the dis-

tance its base should be about one third way up the picture.

2. In a general landscape the horizon line should occupy a position about one third way from the top or the bottom of the picture; with the latter a cloud negative will probably be required.

3. It is advisable that the general line of the picture should run on a diagonal or take a pyramidal shape.

4. A long obtrusive line should never be permitted to intersect the picture; it should always be broken up as far as possible.

5. A picture should never be cut in two by a dark object against a light background, or by a light object against a dark background.

6. If the general features of a picture have a wedge-like form, care should be taken that the wedge is supported near the point, in order to give the idea of stability.

7. The general lines of a picture should be balanced by opposing lines.

8. A large patch of one approximately uniform tint is objectionable to the eye, and should be broken up.

9. The object of interest should be pictorially focussed by a general sweep of light if it be a dark object, or of shadow if it be a light object, thus causing the eye to fall naturally upon it.

10. Avoid monotony, whether in constant repetition of lines, lights, or shades, and never allow a picture to be symmetrical on the right and left of its centre. A repetition of a high light once or twice in a lower tone is, however, much to be recommended.

These rules may safely be taken as canons of pictorial photography, and the observance of them will give those qualities of unity, breadth and harmony without which a picture is impossible. They should therefore be thoroughly assimilated and their practical application mastered. And by this I do not mean that they are to be mathematically applied to every view before which the camera is set up, but only that they must more or less govern all good composition.

The leading quality in all good pictures is unity, which has been defined as the fit connection of all parts to a perfect whole. It is opposed to scattered ideas, scattered lines or scattered lights in composition. Its effect is to give oneness and solidity to a picture, and whatever other quality the picture may lack, it must possess this one, or it falls to pieces. When we speak of unity in a picture we mean that one leading idea must be maintained throughout the whole. Photography is one of the arts of expression. Every photograph therefore should have a story to tell, and I think that the story should always be a pleasing one.

My first bit of serious advice would be never to photograph a scene which does not express something. It matters not what the story may be; it may be of a babbling mountain brook in its various moods and phases; it may be of a small lake in a circle of hills; it may be a breaking wave dashing high up on a rocky coast. There is a story in all of these well worth the telling, which can receive no more truthful telling than by means of the camera, if it be rightly used. Only let each view have its own story, and let it be so plainly told that there may be no room for doubt as to what was meant to be expressed.

In every landscape worth making a study of, there will always be found some object of more importance than the rest, to which all other parts play a secondary part. The first duty of the photographer is to determine what this important object is and to select such a spot for his camera as will make the most of what he has determined to be the principal object. When this is done the picture will almost come of itself; it surely will if one other important element in pictorial composition be present in the picture—viz., balance. By this is meant a proper disposition of lines and masses of light and shade so that one balances the other. All lines should be balanced or compensated by other opposing lines. Masses of light and shade should be opposed to contrasting masses. In this way the principal object will be given its proper degree of prominence in the picture. Examples of the application of these principles will be given as we advance in our subject. The object of the present paper is simply to lay down broad general principles which may help the beginner in his attempts at good composition.

If he will procure and study John Burnett's "Essays on Art" and H. P. Robinson's "Pictorial Effect in Photography" and supplement his reading by the critical examination of good pictures, he will soon find that